



FEB 2021

CONGRESSMAN JOE NEGUSE

FIRST ANNUAL WILDFIRE SUMMIT

LOVELAND
REPORTER-HERALD

**Rep. Joe Neguse hosts wildfire summit
with Colorado governor, senators**

The Gazette

**Rep. Joe Neguse to hold wildfire
recovery listening session**

CBS
Denver

**'We Still Are Suffering': Coloradans Discuss
Wildfire Recovery & Prevention With Rep. Joe
Neguse, State Leaders**

HEARING FROM YOU!

We held our first annual Wildfire Summit in February 2021, bringing together **scientists, fire fighters, forest management experts, state and local emergency management officials and impacted Coloradans** for a wide-ranging discussion on wildfire preparedness, mitigation, resiliency and recovery.

In 2020, our district experienced two of the largest wildfires in Colorado history. As we look to problem-solve and increase investments at the federal level, it's important that we hear from stakeholders at every level to set the best path forward. Our Wildfire Summit opened with a listening session with over 800 Coloradans, who shared their stories from this year's wildfire season. Senator Hickenlooper, Senator Bennet and Governor Polis joined to hear from all of you and to learn from your experiences.

Later in the day, we held 6 hours of panel sessions with experts from across Colorado. A few highlights from these panels are below:

FOREST MANAGEMENT

A team of experts including forest supervisors and Colorado's Natural Resources Department shed light on what forest management means and how it can be a tool for fire prevention. These experts presented the need for a coordinated and science-based approach to restoration and management and the buy-in of local communities to encourage collaboration.

THE SCIENCE OF WILDFIRES

When it comes to approaching and planning for wildfires, it is essential that we are guided by science. Scientists from our federal labs emphasized the importance of studying wildfires to better understand their behavior and impacts.



800+

COLORADANS

Science is a critical tool to looking into the future and preparing for the effects of climate change on our communities

WATERSHED IMPACTS AND FLOOD MITIGATION

Colorado is the source of many of the West and Great Plains' most important watersheds, and drought and fire have great impact on the health and abundance of water downstream. Water management experts shared with us the importance of being proactive with water management since infrastructure projects are so time-intensive and the necessity of interagency coordination at all levels of government. Water is one of the most important resources on this planet, and its health and management will be essential in securing a sustainable future.

DISASTER RECOVERY

As we plan for a future with climate change, we must foresee and invest in our disaster recovery plans. Local communities are at the forefront of these disasters but collaboration at all levels of government is essential so that impacted communities do not get left behind. When planning for wildfires specifically, our emergency management officials noted important points like how fire and flood should be observed as an extension of the same disaster instead of two different ones and the importance of holistic responses.



STRENGTHENING FIRE SERVICES AND WORKFORCE

While Colorado wildfires have gotten more extreme and unpredictable, our workforce and services combatting the fires will require additional support to keep up with the problem. In this session, specialists shared the problems facing fire services. Some challenges facing our firefighting workforce include that rural fire districts, where most fires start, are at risk of losing funding, most firefighters are volunteers, and Colorado mutual aid networks are far behind compared to other states.

